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# Brad Carson: Presidential Appointment Makes Him the Army's Top Civilian Lawyer

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Brad Carson:



# Presidential appointment makes him the Army's top civilian lawyer

JONELLA FRANK



Brad Carson takes the oath of office as the general counsel of the Army during a formal Pentagon ceremony February 9, 2012. Jeh Charles Johnson, the general counsel of the Department of Defense at the time, administers the oath while Julie Carson holds the Bible.

*U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bernardo E. Fuller*

As the general counsel of the Department of the Army, Brad R. Carson ('94) is the legal adviser to the secretary of the Army and the chief legal officer for the U.S. Army. He assumed the position in January 2012, after being appointed by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent.

Born in Winslow, Arizona, in 1967, Carson graduated from high school in Jenks, Oklahoma. He attended Baylor University, where he earned a bachelor's degree and was chosen as a Rhodes Scholar. He earned a master's degree in politics, philosophy and economics from Oxford University before entering the OU College of Law.

After law school, Carson practiced with Crowe & Dunlevy, specializing in commercial law, with an emphasis on antitrust law. He relocated to Washington, D.C., in 1997 to serve a White House fellowship. He was assigned to the Pentagon, where he worked as a special assistant to the secretary of defense. During his fellowship, Carson travelled to military bases and visited American troops throughout the United States and in the United Kingdom, Germany, Bosnia, Turkey, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Carson's next stint in the nation's capital came in 2000, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 2nd Congressional District of Oklahoma. He was reelected to a second term in 2002 after winning almost 75 percent of the vote.

Following an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate and the expiration of his term in the U.S. House, Carson accepted a teaching fellowship at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Upon completion of the fellowship, Carson, an enrolled tribal member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, returned to Claremore, Oklahoma, and worked as the chief executive officer of Cherokee Nation Businesses LLC in nearby Catoosa. CNB is the economic component of the nation's second largest Indian tribe, which owns companies in the gaming, hospitality, personnel services, distribution, manufacturing, telecommunications and environmental services industries.

Carson, an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve, left CNB in December 2008 for active duty in Iraq, embedded with the U.S. Army's 84th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion. He



Prior to the swearing-in ceremony, the Carson family met with Joseph W. Westphal, undersecretary of the Army. Pictured are Jack David Carson, Julie Carson, Westphal, Brad Carson and his father, Jack Carson.

*U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bernardo E. Fuller*

worked as an intelligence officer with EOD teams at seven bases in southern Iraq investigating activities related to improvised explosive devices. Carson was awarded the Bronze Star and the Army Achievement Medal for his service.

In January 2010, after returning to Oklahoma, Carson accepted a position at the University of Tulsa as a professor in the College of Business and the College of Law and director of the National Energy Policy Institute. He was serving in this capacity when nominated by the president to become the Army's top civilian lawyer.

**"I'm very humbled to serve in this position and will strive to maintain the faith of the American people and the Department of the Army."**

In a formal swearing-in ceremony held in February 2012 in the Hall of Heroes in the Pentagon, Carson said, "I'm very humbled to serve in this position and will strive to maintain the faith of the American people and the Department of the Army."

Carson and his wife, Julie, who serves on the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, have one son, Jack David.